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By ST/VSW Date 6/25/84

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

July 2, 1971

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MEMORANDUM FOR MR. HENRY A. KISSINGER  
THE WHITE HOUSE

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Subject: Detention American Owned Vessels  
in Somalia

Since my previous memorandum of June 18 on this subject, some progress has been made in resolving some elements of the problem of the detained vessels. There is still no indication, however, when the craft and crew will be released by the Somali Government, despite the fact that General Samantar, Secretary of Defense, has twice promised our Ambassador that he would have an official reply in the "near future." Following several representations the Somali Government finally granted our Embassy in Mogadiscio consular access with the Americans among the crew on June 23. An Embassy officer immediately got in touch with the men. The crew are being well treated. A local Somali shipping agent is assisting the American owners in efforts to resolve the problem and an American agent for the owners arrived in Mogadiscio on June 20. Four of the craft are now in a protected anchorage but the fifth, a tug, has taken five feet of water and may not be salvageable.

Ambassador Hadsel has emphasized the seriousness of the problem and the need to release the craft in numerous meetings with high level Somali officials. Assistant Secretary Newsom has called Somali Ambassador Addou to the Department on two occasions to express the same points. Our Embassy in Mogadiscio

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has been successful in obtaining permission for a salvage tug to enter Somali waters. It is also making every effort to obtain a visa renewal for the American company representative. The assistance of the Saudi Arabian Government has been enlisted. Our respective embassies in Panama (four of the craft have Panamanian registry), Bonn (most of the crew are German nationals), Brasilia (five crew members are Brazilian), and London (Lloyds insures the craft for \$6 million) have discussed the case with the host governments. To one extent or another these governments are trying to be helpful.

Senior officials of SEDCO Inc. and the Houston Contracting Company are understandably concerned over the delay and continue to press strongly for the earliest possible release of the crew and craft. The Department is in frequent contact with representatives of both companies. The company officials have a better understanding of the difficulties which we face in dealing with the Somalis, however, and appear less inclined than previously to hold a press conference on the incident. At the request of the President and one of the Vice Presidents of Houston Contracting Company, the Department arranged a meeting with Somali Ambassador Addou at the Somali Embassy on July 2 for the purpose of discussing the incident. The meeting was cordial and Ambassador Addou agreed to issue visas to both officials should they decide to proceed to Somalia. The two officials expressed appreciation for the assistance they are receiving from the Department.

Ambassador Hadsel will be seeing Foreign Secretary Omar Arteh in the next day or two. The latter has been away from Mogadiscio for the past three weeks.

*for Charles F. Brewster Jr.*

Robert C. Brewster  
Acting Executive Secretary

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